

REVIEW ARTICLE: *THE AMNYE MA-CHHEN RANGE
AND ADJACENT REGION* BY JOSEPH ROCK

Nyangchakja*



Joseph Francis Charles Rock. 1956. *The Amnye Ma-Chhen Range and Adjacent Region: a Monographic Study*. Rome: Serie Orientale Roma, vol. XII. 194 pp. 82 BW photographs. 5 color maps (English, hardcover).¹²

As of 10 June 2020, HOLLIS² and Google searches produced four reviews of *The Amnye Ma-Chhen Range*³ and *Adjacent Region: a Monographic Study* (Lionello Lanciotti (1956) in English, Rolf A Stein (1956) in French and, in German, Ulrich Schweinfurth (1958) and Dominik Schröder (1958). The small number of reviews may be due to the lesser-known areas AMCR addressed, which has encouraged me to write this review and include place names as they existed in 2020.⁴

AMCR documented geographical, botanical, ornithological, ethnographical, and local historical accounts in parts of AMCR during Joseph Rock's expedition in 1926. The trip was part of a program from 1924 to 1927 sponsored by Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum. Published in 1956, Rock prioritized finding the precise height of Amnye Ma-Chhen (Rma rgyal spom ra, Animaqing) Mountain,⁵ solving the mystery of the Mgo log (Guoluo) Queen,⁶ and exploring botanically unexplored valleys and gorges of the Yellow River.

The orthographic (letter by letter) transliteration system and phonetic transcription system provided by Basil John Gould (1883-1956) and Hugh Edward Richardson⁷ (1905-2000) with minor changes, was employed to Romanize Tibetan terms. Tibetan script is also provided for people and place names. Wade-Giles was used for Chinese terms, along with Chinese characters.

The introduction described the administrative structure of Mtsho sngon (Qinghai) before and after its establishment as a province in 1928 when it was divided into nineteen districts or *xian* 'counties'. Rock recorded the old and new names of districts, monasteries, and rivers. Tibet, Xinjiang, Gansu, Xikang, and Sichuan, which bordered Mtsho sngon, were mentioned. Citing the *Records of*

*Nyangchakja (Snying lcags rgyal, Niangjijia). 2021. Review Article: The Amnye Ma-Chhen Range and Adjacent Region by Joseph Rock. *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 60:94-107.

¹ On 12 June 1956, in the preface of this book, Rock thanked Giuseppe Tucci and the University of Washington's Far Eastern and Russian Institute for facilitating publication as Volume 12 of the Eastern Roma Series. Correspondence between Rock, Tucci, and Tucci's colleagues is available at <https://bit.ly/36F16cl> (accessed 29 May 2020).

² Harvard On-Line Library Information System.

³ Hereafter: AMCR.

⁴ I am a native of Mang ra (Guinan) County and familiar with the region AMCR addresses (Nangchukja 2011, 2015; Nyangchakja 2016, 2018).

⁵ In 1922, Rock met Brigadier General George Edward Pereira (1865-1923) in Yunnan. Pereira told Rock that he had seen Amnye Ma-Chhen Mountain on his way from Beijing to Lhasa and claimed that the mountain would prove taller than Mount Everest. Intrigued, Rock wished to explore the mountain.

⁶ Rock described the "queen" as a tribal leader of about 600 households and the first Mgo log tribal ruler who submitted to Muslim Warlord Ma Qi (1869-1931). She was subsequently taken prisoner and released later. Her relationship with Ma Qi made her a "queen," a title that only Ma Qi promoted in an effort to further control the Mgo log area. She was not a favorite of other Mgo log tribes.

⁷ For more on this system, see Basil and Richardson (1943).

Qinghai,¹ Rock also described the establishment and changes of eight counties including Zi ling (Xining) and their subdivisions.

Rock postponed his plan to explore A myes rma chen in 1925 after conflict between Tibetan tribes from west Bla brang (Labuleng) and Muslims, who later controlled Mtsho sngon and Ningxia.² Instead, Rock traveled from Kunming to Chengdu, Co ne (Zhuoni) County, Zi ling, Sku 'bum (Kumbum, Ta'er) Monastery, Mtsho sngon po (Qinghai Lake), Mdo la ri bo (Qilian Mountains), Zhangye City, and back to Co ne County, where he was a guest of the Co ne Prince.

On 26 April 1926, Rock set out from Co ne Monastery to A myes rma chen with armed Naxi (Nakhi) men from Lijiang. They first traveled to Bla brang Monastery. Then, following a trail along the Klu chu (Tao River) to the ruined city of Taozhou (Lintan County), Rock headed to Gtsod (Hezuo City), and on to Bla brang.³ Rock photographed and made brief observations of towns, villages, monasteries, mountain ranges, and rivers from Co ne to Bla brang.

Rock gave a brief historical account of the Bsang chu (Xiahe) area, including the time of China's First Emperor (Qin Shi Huang, 259-210 BC), the Tibetan Empire (seventh to ninth centuries AD), the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD), Song Dynasty (960-1279), the Tea-horse Trade, the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Imperial Preceptors, Buddhist Patriarchs, and the construction of Taoyang City (later known as Taozhou; contemporary Lintan County, Gansu Province). Rock also described Seng ge gshong (Wutun) Village in Reb gong (Huangnan), the Mongolian settlement of the Bsang chu area during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911/12), the establishment of Bla brang Monastery, the Mongol Prince of the South Yellow River, and the Bajiaocheng 'Eight-edged City' in Rgan rgya (Ganjia Township, Xiahe County). Rock depicted Bsang chu as a center for Tibetans in China's northwest borderland and Linxia as a Muslim center. A history of antagonistic relationships between Tibetans and Muslims was also given.

Much of the historical accounts on the topics above were likely drawn from Chinese-language works; however, references are not given.

Rock detailed the history of Bla brang Monastery and its academic schools, reincarnations, monks, finances, and buildings. A brief historical account was given of the Mongol tribes, the Mongol Prince of the South Yellow River, and their relationship with the monastery founder. Rock estimated 3,000 monks resided at the monastery at the time of his visit.⁴ A brief overview was given of the Fifth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa (1916-1947), his family members, and earlier incarnations.

In 1925, Rock had met and photographed the Fifth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa at the age of ten, and the *bla ma's* father, Mgon po don grub (Huang Weizhong), at the age of fifty-five in Brag dkar (Baishiya) Monastery in Co ne⁵ after they were exiled because of conflict with Muslims.⁶

In 1954, when Rock was no longer in China, he received a letter from Marion Grant Griebenow (1899-1972),⁷ a missionary in Bla brang from 1922 to 1949, who had met Rock when he was in Bla

¹ *Qinghaiji*, a historical manuscript Rock managed to have copied from a library in Nanking (Nanjing). A handwritten manuscript with the same title written by Kang Furong, a post-Qing officer who served in today's Stong skor (Huangyuan) County, was published in 1968.

² Ill-equipped Tibetans led by Mgon po don grub (?) were defeated by the Zi ling-based Ninghai Army led by Ma Bufang (1902-1973) (Nietupski 2009).

³ Originating from the east side of the Klu'i chab brag 'Naga Bathing Place' (Xiqing), a Kunlun Mountain range between contemporary Rma chu County and Klu chu County, the Klu chu (Tao River) is a Yellow River tributary.

⁴ Rock (1930a:145) reported 5,000 elsewhere.

⁵ Currently located in Wad mar (Wanmao) Township. Not to be confused with the location of the same name near Lab rang.

⁶ Mgon po don grub, A pa a blo, the Fifth 'Jam dbyangs bshad pa, and the *bla ma's* other family members left Bla brang Monastery and remained in exile from July 1924 to 1927 (Nietupski 2009).

⁷ Nietupski (1999, 2011) studied and published Griebenow's experiences and photographs from Bla brang Monastery.

brang. The letter stated that 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa had died from smallpox in 1947 and described the condition of the *bla ma*'s elder brother, Blo bsang tshe dbang (Huang Zhengqing, 1903-1997, aka A pa a blo). In 1936, A pa a blo was the commander of the Bla brang Peace Preservation Corps.

Rock's interpreter, William E Simpson (1901-1932), was an American missionary fluent in Amdo Tibetan.¹ They started off, traveling from Bla brang Monastery to Ra rgya Monastery. The Sog po A rig Tribe from today's Rma lho Mongol Autonomous County had arranged sixty pack yaks, fourteen horses, four *mdzo* 'cow-yak hybrids', and a number of nomads for Rock's expedition. While traveling through Bsang khog (Sangke) Valley and upper grassland in A rig territory, Rock noted the Mongol origin of A rig nomads and observed nomads living in yurts and speaking Tibetan; however, none were able to speak Mongolian.² Rock named and described the valleys, grassland, rivers, plants, and tribes that he encountered.³ Rock also photographed local Tibetans and places and recorded elevations of certain areas. On 10-11 May, Rock traveled across the Rma lho grassland and passed the Rtse chu (Zequ) River, noting thousands of yaks and sheep belonging to the A rig Tribe. Rock also encountered nomads from the Rong bo Tribe in today's Rtse khog (Zeku) County. A key encounter was with eighty-year-old A lags la kha tshang, a respected *bla ma* from Gtsang (Shizang) Monastery. According to a history of this monastery, the *bla ma* passed away at the age of eighty-one in 1927 (Chos 'phel rgya mtsho 2000). Rock photographed the *bla ma* seated in front of a yurt with a young incarnate *bla ma*. Another photograph has the *bla ma* in a litter transported by four mules, accompanied by several monks on horseback.

Rock reached Ra rgya Monastery in Go srib Valley on 12 May 1927, where he spent two days. He described the location, geographic features, and plant life. Rock explored Yellow River gorges with their native spruce (*Picea asperata*), birch, willows, junipers, and cotoneasters near the monastery where some 500 monks resided. Rock met the fifth reincarnation of Gtsang paN+Di ta (1888-1942),⁴ abbot of the monastery, whose first incarnation founded the monastery. A photograph of the *bla ma* with several other monks is given.

On 15 May, Rock left to return to Ra rgya Monastery while observing the area's geographic features and soon reached the monastery at the foot of A myes khyung mgon Mountain. Rarely visited by foreigners, the monastery was either absent from or inaccurately represented on most contemporary maps. Rock mentioned maps by the British War Office (1939), Albert Tafel (1914), Karl Futterer (1943), Günther Köhler (1928), Vladimir Roborowski (1893), Sven Hedin (1900), VK Ting [Ding Wenjiang ?], William Rockhill [?], Fernand Grenard (1898), Nikolay M Przewalski (1883), Pyotr K Koslof (1905, 1908), and Wilhelm Filchner (1903).

Ra rgya Monastery, founded by A rig dge bshes when Bla brang Monastery was established, had eight major temples and 800-900 monks who lived in several hundred small rooms at the time of Rock's visit. No Chinese lived in Ra rgya at the time. The area was later considered part of 'Ba' (Tongde) County, established by the Nationalist Government in 1935. The monastery served as a trade center with Muslims from Taozhou traveling to high-risk places where the Chinese dared not venture. Local nomads brought butter and cheese to feed the religious community. Muslims traded barley and

¹ Simpson "was killed by bandits near the Tibetan border in China" (<https://bit.ly/2TxcAtk> (accessed 22 May 2020)).

² A small population in Rma lho spoke a variety of Oirat Mongolian and lived in yurts in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Li 1994, Diemberger 2007, Nietupski 2011, Ai 2012, Lha mo sgrol ma and Roche 2014, Roche 2015, and Wallenböck 2016).

³ Klu thar rgyal et al. (2020) records accounts of ordinary Tibetan herders who traveled in the same region in 1929-1958.

⁴ Birth and death dates are from Chos 'phel rgya mtsho (2000).

tea for sheep wool and musk. Cloth, salt, sugar, jujubes, and metal utensils were also traded. Rock noted the woodblock printing of the *Bka' 'gyur* at the monastery.¹

Rock gave a brief local history of Shing bza' paN+Di ta (1898-1937),² aka Shing bza' rin po che, the abbot of Ra rgya Monastery, who was deemed the reincarnation of Tsong kha pa's mother and carried her name. Rock was granted an audience with the *bla ma* and presented gifts, and recommendation letters written by Bla brang Monastery's abbot to the abbot of Ra rgya Monastery and Mgo log tribal leaders. The letters asked that Rock be protected during the expedition. At the meeting, Rock expressed his intention to explore A mnye ma chen Mountain, Yellow River gorges, and Rgyud par Mountain and hoped the *bla ma* would help him forward the letters to Mgo log tribal leaders for protection against robbery. The *bla ma* spoke of the Ri mang, a prominent Mgo log tribe, who were at odds with Ra rgya Monastery because the *bla ma* had forwarded letters from Ma Qi demanding grass and water tax from local tribes. The Mgo log tribes refused to pay. In 1921, Ma Qi had sent 5,000 troops and subjugated the Ri mang Tribe, who then paid the tax. However, nomads killed Ma Qi's tax collectors in the following year, and Ma Qi's men did not return.

Shing bza' rin po che wrote letters to three major Mgo log tribal leaders, requesting that they protect Rock's expedition. Rock waited over a month for their response. A photograph of the *bla ma* is included in *AMCR*. After spending a few days in Ra rgya observing monastic activities, Rock explored the Yellow River's downstream gorges to the north.

On 27 May, Rock set out with ten pack yaks and several horses for the Rgyud par³ Mountains, located between present-day 'Ba' County and Mang ra County. The area between Ra rgya Monastery and his destination had been reported by the German geographer, Karl Futterer (1866-1906), who had explored the mountain range in 1898 (Futterer 1903). Rock's descriptions include local tribes, monasteries, valleys, mountains, districts, rivers, plants, and birds. Brief histories of tribes, their relationships, and territories were documented.

Arriving in 'Ba' Valley, the seat of 'Ba' County (in 2020), Rock studied the flora and gave a brief history of the Hor T'u-yü-hun [Tuyuhun]. After reaching the Rgyud par, Rock spent about two weeks camping in several locations. Local Tibetan nomads from the Klu tshang Tribe from today's Mang ra County were paid to take him to the heart of the mountain range and its forests. Plant specimens were photographed, and their scientific names were provided. Spruce was as tall as forty-six meters. Many of the forests were confined to inaccessible steep valleys and ridges. Accessible ones were in small, dying patches, a condition Rock attributed to local nomads and livestock, without further explanation. Certain plants identified were also found in the Northwestern Himalayas, Siberia, Central Asia, and Alaska, as noted in *AMCR*.

Rock explored most of the mountain range and observed the Yellow River gorge at the west end of the range. Climbing to a vantage point, he observed A tshogs Monastery, Mang ra, Mang ra'i mdo, Mang ra'i bye ma, Smu dge thang, and A myes brag dkar Mountain that are administratively in today's Mang ra County. Unfortunately, Rock did not state the sources for information on tribes and place names related to this trip. On 30 June 1927, Rock returned to Ra rgya Monastery.

Rock gave spellings of "A myes rma chen" in English, Russian, Chinese, and Tibetan, arguing that most non-Tibetan names were incorrect due to a lack of attention to the local language. Based on published sources and local folklore, Rock discussed the etymological origin of A myes rma chen and

¹ In 1925, Rock purchased a copy of the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur* from Co ne Monastery with 2,500 taels of silver for the Library of Congress.

² Birth and death dates are from Mkhas btsun bzang po (2017:151).

³ Variant spellings include Kye phur, Kye phur rdza rgan (Ye shes bzang po 2001), Kye pur (Nangchukja 2015), Ju par (Rock 1930a), Dju-par (Rock 1956), Dschupar (Futterer 1903; Przhevskii 1884), and Jubu (Chinese) on a Chinese map (<https://bit.ly/3h23zCI> (accessed 7 June 2020)). For a google map location, see <https://bit.ly/2XFN9lh> (accessed 7 June 2020).

complained about the mountain's inaccurate location on maps. A section described the A myes rma chen Mountain peak names and surrounding areas while discussing estimates of peak heights and range lengths of A myes rma chen by other explorers.

A description of the mountain pilgrim trail was provided by a local tribal leader, whom Rock met at Ra rgya Monastery. The description included key places, rivers, and deities of A myes rma chen Mountain, and how people circumambulated and prostrated. About 10,000 pilgrims had circumambulated during the Year of the Horse, according to the Tibetan Calendar.¹ Rock also described the A myes rma chen deity in *thang ka* and murals that he saw in Gtsang and Co ne monasteries. In a Sgrol ma 'Tara' *thang ka* he was given by Shing bza' rin po che, Rock identified an image of A myes rma chen and noted that the Naxi of Lijiang worshiped the same mountain deity. A photograph of a Naxi *thang ka* was included in *AMCR*, along with a Naxi manuscript written in pictographic glyphs that was translated into English.

A detailed history of Mgo log with its main tribes, territories, and independently-minded people was given, along with a folktale on the origin of the Mgo log people (from Rolf A Stein, 1911-1999). There were about 50,000 households in the Mgo log area.² Rock described the Mgo log people as rebellious, lawless, and notorious, who obeyed no one but their tribe. People from other countries were not allowed to come near most tribal camps. Banditry was rampant and foreign explorers were subject to attack. Rock (1956:137) wrote, "such hostile and unfriendly people I have never met anywhere in the world; it seems that a smile never crosses their coarse features."

Lacking high-powered rifles, the nomads carried rifles originally from the Franco-Russian War in 1870 and American-made rifles from the First World War. Rock noted that such rifles cost nine dollars in the US. The nomads paid much more to Mongolian and Muslim traders who bought them and smuggled them in from the Russians.

AMCR also described Gnyan po g.yu rtse (Nianbo yuze) Mountain with its peaks, rivers, lakes, trails, surrounding tribes, and monasteries. Unseen by previous foreign explorers, it was located in the heart of the Mgo log tribes. Foreign visitors were forbidden. There is no evidence in *AMCR* that Rock ever saw the mountain. Information on Gnyan po g.yu rtse and other survey maps in the book was provided by Simpson, who traveled widely in A mdo and occasionally helped local Tibetans present their disputes with Muslims to the governor of Lanzhou. Simpson was a trusted friend of Ra rgya and Bla brang monasteries and, later, of the Mgo log tribes.

Two of the responses to Shing bza' rin po che's letters to Mgo log tribal leaders were rejections, threatening death to Rock and his party if they approached their encampments. However, the Khang gsar tribal leader agreed to protect and receive Rock, delegating the responsibility to the Rta bo dme tshang tribal leader to protect and take Rock to the Khang gsar territory. The letter was given in *AMCR* in a Romanized transliteration and an English translation.

One of the tribal leaders who disapproved of Rock's exploration to A myes rma chen Mountain threatened death to anyone who helped Rock and his men cross the Yellow River. Consequently, no one at Ra rgya dared help Rock. The monks at Ra rgya also discouraged Rock from crossing. Rock finally communicated to the abbot of Ra rgya Monastery that if he did not support his travel, he would ask Ma Qi, who had told Rock he would protect his expedition, to send soldiers from Zi ling or Bla brang and escort him to A myes rma chen. Subsequently, the abbot arranged for the leader of the nearby Rgya bza' Tribe to escort Rock and his interpreter. The tribal leader then ordered all of his armed men to prepare Rock's expedition to A myes rma chen.

¹ For a documentary on A myes rma chen Mountain and related pilgrimage, see <https://tinyurl.com/y7jklppb> (accessed 3 June 2020; Nangchukja and Tashi Dorje 2014) and Bleisch (2017).

² Elsewhere, Rock (1930a:131) reported 90,000.

On 14 July, Rock's group crossed the Yellow River on goatskin rafts as their horses swam across. Rock's nomad protectors knew the mountains and encampment locations of the Mgo log tribes. They were anxious that anyone seeing them in the area would alert the Mgo log tribes to rob Rock and his party. In an attempt to move quickly, they rode fast horses and traveled light along mountain ridges. With limited provisions, the armed nomads hunted musk deer for food.

Rock collected botanical specimens, gave descriptions and names, and explored virgin juniper forests. His party also observed distant mountains at vantage points, recording heights and temperatures of certain passes and summits. While on the summit of A myes 'brug dgu,¹ Rock estimated the elevation of A myes rma chen at 6,400.8 meters, which is close to its actual elevation of 6,282 meters (Rowell 1982). However, Rock (1930a:185) first concluded the height to be "more than 28,000 feet" (8,534.4 meters) in a 1930 article for the *National Geographic Magazine*.

On 20 July 1926, Rock and Simpson reached the foot of a mountain² and climbed to the summit, the closest Rock got to A myes rma chen. Enjoying the view of the mountain, Rock elsewhere (1930a:185) wrote:

With difficulty I tore myself from that sublime view—a view of the eastern massif of the mountain from west of the Yellow River which no other foreigners had ever had. I remained for some time alone on that isolated summit, lost in reverie and easily comprehending why the Tibetans should worship these snowy peaks as emblems of purity.

As Rock and Simpson were photographing the mountain, a local nomad suddenly appeared on a nearby peak, burned incense, chanted prayers, and disappeared without interacting with Rock and Simpson. In fear of the nomad alerting the notorious Mgo log tribes of their presence, Rock reluctantly descended.³ In great disappointment, Rock and his nomad guards hurried to Ra rgya, retracing their route. *AMCR* does not provide further information on how and where Rock traveled afterward. In correspondence, Rock expressed disappointment in not finding more tree species in the region. In correspondence with Charles S Sargent (1841-1927) of the Arnold Arboretum on 12 August 1926, Rock described his return to Co ne via Bla brang Monastery. On the way to Bla brang, he encountered conflict between the Wuja (O'u rgya) and Gartse (Mgar rtse) tribes.⁴ Afterward, he explored The bo (Diebu) County.

AMCR's five maps provide trail lines indicating explored areas other than the places Rock mentioned in *AMCR*, such as today's Khri ka (Guide) County and Ya rdzi (Xunhua Salar (Sala) Autonomous) County. Simpson's trails also appear in the map undifferentiated from Rock's.

Early geographers and botanists such as Nikolay Przhevalskii (1884), Pyotr Kozloff (1902), Karl Futterer (1903), and Joseph Rock (1956) traveled off beaten paths, crossing today's Mang ra County and 'Ba' County in A mdo. Most other explorers in A mdo traveled well-known routes to and from Mtsho sngon po Lake, Sku 'bum Monastery, Zi ling, and Bla brang.

¹ See the probable location of this summit at <https://bit.ly/3onTjhU> (accessed 6 June 2020). A search of the same location on map.baidu.com shows Zhaga'er and Zhege, that bear some phonetic resemblance to 'Brug dgu.

² Rock gave "Sha chu'i yim khar" as the name of the mountain, which I did not locate in local historical records (Bkra shis rgya mtsho and Thugs mchog rdo rje 1991; A bu dkar lo et al. 2000; Tshogs drug rang grol 2002; Pad ma tshe ring 2004; Bkra shis don grub 2016). It was also unknown to several locals I interviewed. Based on Rock's map and descriptions, the probable location of "Sha chu'i yim khar" Mountain is <https://bit.ly/2UjTAyF> (accessed 6 June 2020). Shaqie appears near the same location and has some phonetic similarity to "Sha chu'u." See <https://bit.ly/2UlsKX7> (accessed 6 June 2020).

³ The area was accessible after 1949, e.g., see Rowell's (1982) account of his experience with fifteen American explorers.

⁴ <https://bit.ly/2XbxznB> (accessed 27 May 2020).

Rock claimed in a *National Geographic Magazine* article that the unexplored area of the upper Yellow River and A myes rma chen Mountain remained undisturbed by major human-induced activities:

Here, in remote, almost inaccessible valleys, I found countless wild animals still unafraid of man, peaceful as in Eden ... Here, in July, was ice, and flowers bloomed in the snow (Rock 1930a:131).

Herds of antelope appeared, too (Rock 1930a:154).

The whole region between the Yellow River and A mye rma chen is one great zoological garden. Wherever I looked I saw wild animals grazing contentedly. There were various deer, wapiti, and many other animals unknown to me (Rock 1930a:172).

Studies of Rock and his explorations in Tibetan areas of China (Sutton 1974; Aris 1992; Wagner 1991; 1992; Yoshinaga et al. 1880; Mueggler 2011; Goodman 2006) tend to mention his A myes rma chen Mountain expedition briefly but neglect the exploration of Rgyud par Mountain and Yellow River gorges. Rock claimed the Yellow River's gorges were "absolutely terra incognita" (Sutton 1974:136). No similar published accounts document following Rock's trail in the less explored Yellow River gorges and Rgyud par Mountain. These lesser-known area names were located in the catalogs of Rock's botanical work that lists the plants with their original locations (Bangs and Peters 1928; Rehder and Wilson 1928; Rehder and Kobuski 1932, 1933).

Rock is well-known for his botanical and geographic explorations, ethnographic and linguistic studies of the Yunnan Naxi, and Tibetans in contemporary Muli (Smi li) Tibetan Autonomous County, Sichuan Province. His investigations of the A myes rma chen Mountain, monasteries, Yellow River gorges, and Rgyud par Mountain in *AMCR* are also valuable. *AMCR* documented botanical specimens, geographical features, and histories in A mdo that record important information before regional chaos in 1958 and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). *AMCR*'s eighty-two captioned photographs that were taken in 1926 have great historical value. Rock stated that a second part of the book - *Am-nye Ma-Chhen Classic* - would be published by Johannes Schubert (1896-1976), a work I did not locate. The only available publication related to Rock and Schubert that I found was their correspondence from 1935-1961 in *Briefwechsel JF Rock-J. Schubert 1935-1961* in German.

Rock's published writings¹ on Tibetan areas include studies that focus on his explorations in Muli Tibetan Autonomous County, the A myes rma chen and Mi nyag gangs dkar (Gongga) mountains, Co ni Monastery, The bo (Diebu) County, and descriptions of religious rituals, customs, livelihoods, and rivers.

AMCR merits a new edition that addresses variant spellings and formatting inconsistencies and updates the Tibetan and Chinese glossaries and tabulation of botanical names. Additional detailed information is available in Rock's unpublished correspondence and photograph captions. Some studies (Sutton 1974; Aris 1992) have synthesized and published selections of Rock's key findings and selected photographs, but much valuable information on his interactions with and comments on everyday encounters remains unpublished.

Local Tibetan communities and tribes are likely to have limited historical information other than oral histories passed on by their elders, tribal histories written retroactively in the post-Cultural Revolution period, biographies of reincarnated *bla ma*, and rewritten records of monasteries. Consequently, *AMCR* and Rock's unpublished archives of manuscripts, photographs and captions, correspondences, and films offer important information. The photographs are particularly meaningful.

¹ Rock 1925a, 1925b, 1929a, 1929b, 1929c, 1929d, 1929e, 1930a, 1930b, 1931, 1933, 1935, 1926, 1956, and 1959.

Place names in *AMCR* present challenges. For example, Rock mentioned a mountain named *Sha ri yang ra* in Tibetan and Changshitou Shan 'Long Rocky Range' in Chinese. Unfortunately, I was unable to find this name in published local history records.¹ The locals I consulted were also unfamiliar with the name "*Sha ri yang ra*."² However, locals used *Rma ta la'i rdo sgang ring mo*, bearing the same meaning of 'Long Rocky Range' in the Chinese name when referring to Changshitou Shan in 2020. This range is located in today's Rma stod County in Mgo log.

Rock's versions of Tibetan place names differ from the 2020 versions. Certain names Rock provided were misspelled, and others may have been spelled differently at the time of Rock's visit. For example, *Me tshang* is a tribal name that Rock probably misspelled. A contemporary Wylie version is *Dme tshang* (Pad ma tshe ring 2004:54). Located between 'Ba' and Mang ra counties, *Rgyud par* is a mountain name that Rock provided but spelled differently elsewhere, e.g., *Ju par* (Rock 1930a) and *Dju-par* (Rock 1956). The name for this same mountain is rendered as *Kye phur* and *Kye phur rdza rgan* in a local Tibetan history source (Ye shes bzang po 2001), *Kye pur by* Nangchukja (2015), and as *Dschupar* (Futterer 1903; Przhevalskii 1884). In 2020, *Ju pur* more accurately resembled the colloquial pronunciation of the mountain name in local Tibetan.

In terms of Rock's personality, Sutton (1974) stated that Rock often met high officials and *bla ma* and was reluctant to associate with commoners. He preferred to eat alone. Rock was racially biased, despising the Chinese. He was "absolutely convinced of the white man's superiority" and displayed an archetypical European colonialist mentality (Sutton 1974:115). Rock's perception of the Tibetans at the time was evident in a *National Geographic Magazine* article (Rock 1930a:131):

Time turns back a thousand years when one talks to the superstitious and vexatiously inquisitive, suspicious folk who inhabit this lonely nook of the world.

"The earth is flat," they say. "In its middle stands a big mountain. The sun sets by going behind this."

A miserable land it is, of poverty and incredible filth; a land cut off from all the modern world; a region which, for uncounted centuries, has had its own forms of government, of religion and social customs; yet a region which knows no railway, no motor car, no radio, or aught of all that science and invention have given the world since Marco Polo's day.

Nevertheless, Rock's many abilities and achievements should not be overlooked. In addition to botanist, ethnographer, explorer, geographer, and photographer, Rock was proficient in German, French, Greek, Italian, Chinese, and Arabic. He sympathized with the Naxi and offered help generously. Gwen (1983) wrote:

He [Rock] felt greater kinship and more sympathy for [the Naxi] than for the Chinese. Years later as his collecting declined, he worked on manuscripts recording the history of the Naxi people and, eventually, produced an impressive dictionary of Naxi pictography script... Few know that he gave generously of his medicines and his skill in treating simple illnesses to the people of the villages and farms. He was scrupulous about paying for whatever was acquired from them.

Later he [Rock] wrote, ... "I want to die among those beautiful mountains [in Lijiang] rather than in a bleak hospital bed all alone."

¹ Bkra shis rgya mtsho and Thugs mchog rdo rje 1991; A bu dkar lo et al. 2000; Tshogs drug rang grol 2002; Pad ma tshe ring 2004; and Bkra shis don grub 2016.

² Based on Rock's descriptions and map, two possible locations of the range are <https://bit.ly/2MyNwhF> and <https://bit.ly/3f1AS78> (accessed 6 June 2020).

In conclusion, the *AMCR* gives a broad sweep of historical, political, botanical, geographical, and ethnographical information in parts of the A mdo Tibetan region in the early twentieth century. With high-quality photographs, the *AMCR* is a rare, informative monograph on the less known areas of A mdo in much of the twentieth century. This work is of great value for Tibetologists and local Tibetans. Published nearly a century ago, many references to places are ambiguous, inaccurate, or no longer relevant. This vital work deserves republication in an updated form to be of increased relevance in contemporary times.

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TIBETAN TERMS

'ba' འབལ།	a tshogs ཨ་ཚོགས།
'jam dbyangs bzhad pa འཇམ་དབྱངས་བཟན་པ།	bka' 'gyur བཀའ་འགྱུར།
a lags la kha tshang ཨ་ལགས་ལཱ་ཁ་ཚང་།	bla brang ལྷ་བྲང་།
a mdo ཨ་མདོ།	bla ma ལྷ་མ།
Amnye Ma-Chhen, a myes rma chen ཨ་མྱེས་མ་ཚེན།	blo bsang tshe dbang ལྷོ་བཟང་ཚེ་དབང་།
a myes 'brug dgu ཨ་མྱེས་འབྲུག་དགུ།	brag dkar བྲག་དཀར།
a myes brag dkar ཨ་མྱེས་བྲག་དཀར།	bsang chu བསང་ཆུ།
a myes khyung mgon ཨ་མྱེས་ཀྱུང་མགོན།	bsang khog བསང་ཁོག།
a myes rma chen ཨ་མྱེས་མ་ཚེན།	bstan 'gyur བསྐྱར་འགྱུར།
a pa a blo ཨ་པ་ཨ་ལྷོ།	co ne ཅོ་ནེ།
a rig dge bshes ཨ་རིག་དགེ་བཤེས།	dpe tshang མེ་ཚང་།

gartse, mgar rtse མགར་རུ་ཅེ།
 gnyan po g.yu rtse གཉན་པོ་གཡུ་རུ་ཅེ།
 go srib གོ་སྒྲིབ།
 gtsang གཙང་།
 gtsang paN+Di ta གཙང་པ་ནི་ཏ།
 gtsod གཙོད།
 hor ཧོར།
 ju pur རྩུ་ཕུར།
 khang gsar ཁང་གསར།
 khri ka ཁྲི་ཀ།
 klu chu ལུ་ཅུ།
 klu tshang ལུ་ཅང་།
 klu'i chab brag ལུ་འི་ཅམ་བྲག།
 Kumbum, sku 'bum ལུ་བུམ།
 kye phur རྩེ་ཕུར།
 kye phur rdza rgan རྩེ་ཕུར་རྩ་རྒྱལ།
 lha sa ལྷ་ས།
 mang ra མང་ར།
 mang ra'i mdo མང་རའི་མདོ།
 mang ra'i bye ma མང་རའི་བྱེ་མ།
 mdo la ri bo མདོ་ལ་རི་བོ།
 mdzo མདོ།
 mgo log མགོ་ལོག།
 mgon po don grub མགོན་པོ་དོན་གྲུབ།
 mi nyag gangs dkar མི་ཉག་གངས་དཀར།
 mtsho sngon མཚོ་སྔོན།
 ra rgya ར་རྒྱ།
 reb gong རེབ་གོང་།
 rgan rgya རྒྱལ་རྒྱ།

rgya bza' རྒྱ་བཟའ།
 rgyud par རྒྱུད་པར།
 ri mang རི་མང་།
 rma lho ར་ལྷོ།
 rma rgyal spom ra ར་རྒྱལ་སྒྲོམ་ར།
 rma stod ར་སྟོད།
 rma ta la'i rdo sgang ring mo ར་ཏ་ལའི་རྩོ་སྒང་རིང་མོ།
 rong bo རོང་བོ།
 rta bo dme tshang ར་བོ་དམེ་ཅང་།
 rtse chu རུ་ཅུ།
 rtse khog རུ་ཅོག་ཁོག།
 seng ge gshong སེང་གེ་གཤོང་།
 sgrol ma སྒྲོལ་མ།
 sha chu'i yim khar ཤ་ཅུ་འི་ཡིམ་ཀར།
 sha ri yang ra ཤ་རི་ཡང་ར།
 shing bza' paN+Di ta ཤིང་བཟའ་པ་ནི་ཏ།
 shing bza' rin po che ཤིང་བཟའ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།
 sku 'bum ལུ་བུམ།
 smi li སྐལ་ལྷི།
 smu dge thang སྐུ་དགེ་ཅང་།
 snying lcags rgyal སྙིང་ལཱ་གས་རྒྱལ།
 sog po a rig སོག་པོ་ཨ་རིག།
 thang ka ཅང་ཀ།
 the bo ཅེ་བོ།
 tsong kha pa ཅོང་ཀ་པ།
 Wuja, o'u rgya ཨ་འུ་རྒྱ།
 ya rdzi ཡ་རུ་ཅི།
 zi ling ཟི་ལིང་།

CHINESE TERMS

Animaqing 安尼玛卿

Baishiya 白石崖

Bajiaocheng 八角城

Beijing 北京

Changshitou Shan 长石头山

Chengdu 成都

Diebu 迭部

Ganjia 甘加

Gansu 甘肃

Gongga 贡嘎

Guide 贵德

Guinan 贵南

Guoluo 果洛

Henan 河南蒙古自治县

Hezuo 合作

Huang Weizhong 黄位中

Huang Zhengqing 黄正青

Huangnan 黄南

Jubu 居布

Kang Furong 康敷容

Kunlun 昆仑

Kunming 昆明

Labuleng 拉不楞

Lijiang 丽江

Lintan 临潭

Linxia 临夏

Ma Bufang 马步芳

Ma Qi 马麒

Ming 明 Dynasty

Muli 木里

Naxi 纳西

Nianbo yuze 年宝玉则

Niangjijia 娘吉加

Ninghai 宁海

Ningxia 宁夏

Qilian 祁连

Qin Shi Huang 秦始皇

Qing 清 Dynasty

Qinghai 青海

Sangke 桑科

Shaqie 沙切

Shizang 石藏

Sichuan 四川

Song 宋 Dynasty

Ta'er 塔尔

Tang 唐 Dynasty

Tao 洮

Taoyang 洮阳

Taozhou 洮州

Tongde 同德

T'u-yü-hun [Tuyuhun] 吐谷浑

Wutun 吾屯

Xiahe 夏河

xian 县

Xikang 西康

Xining 西宁

Xinjiang 新疆

Xiqing 西倾

Xunhua Salar [Sala] Autonomous County,

Xunhua sala zizhixian 循化撒拉自治县

Yunnan 云南

Zeku 泽库

Zequ 泽曲

Zhangye 张掖

Zhega'er 哲尔

Zhege 哲戈

Zhuoni 卓尼